

THE  
DISTRIBUTION,  
A  
POEM;

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN  
ODE TO DILIGENCE.

BY GEO. HAY, STUDENT.

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TANTUS AMOR LAUDUM, TANTÆ EST VICTORIA CURÆ.  
VIRG.

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T O  
GEORGE JARDINE, *A. M.*  
PROFESSOR OF LOGICK

IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW;

THE FOLLOWING POEMS,  
WRITTEN ON SUBJECTS  
PROPOSED BY HIM,

ARE,  
WITH THE WARMEST GRATITUDE,  
AND MOST PROFOUND RESPECT,

INSCRIBED,

BY  
HIS MOST OBEDIENT,

AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

GEORGE HAY.

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THE design of the following Poem is to describe the emulous Student's mind, from the first intimation of the Prizes given in this University, 'till their distribution on the first of May. It was intended as a Prize-essay, and not designed for the Press, 'till after it had stood the trial; but at the request of some Gentlemen Students it is now published.

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T H E  
D I S T R I B U T I O N.

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**A**WAKE! my Muse, the pleasing task essay!  
In chearful lays your gratitude display!  
Of EMULATION sing, that noble flame,  
To which you owe your merit and your fame!  
Nor him forget, who freely deigns to spread  
The verdant laurel on the victor's head!  
And let a note sincere for him transpire,  
Who first infus'd the pure celestial fire.

BE these your theme, and may support divine,  
Propitiously attend the just design!  
But how shall words sufficiently express,  
Or clothe conceptions in a proper dress?  
How shall ideas adequate be found,  
Ev'n tho' the most sublime and clear abound?

To EMULATION vastly more we owe,  
 Than human language can pretend to show:  
 Without this spark our dignity would cease,  
 And fordid indolence assume it's place:  
 Important duties must be left behind,  
 And savage ignorance possess the mind:  
 To base degeneracy each would fall,  
 External decency be lost to all:  
 The gifts of Nature unimprov'd would ly,  
 Nor would we venture strength or skill to try.  
 The sailor, taken with the love of ease,  
 Would trembling shun the wide, the boistrous seas:  
 Nor would the foldier, on the martial plain,  
 His country's rights and liberties maintain.  
 The lawyer too, if careless of applause,  
 Would coolly plead the most important cause.  
 The lib'ral sciences all would neglect,  
 And treat the nobler arts with disrespect.  
 Then must the mind, of light and truth bereft,  
 In darkness and delusion blind be left.  
 In schools too frequently we might complain,  
 Of tasks too hard, and labour spent in vain.



B U T Nature, always provident and kind,  
 With this incentive stimulates the mind :  
 For what can more the Student's mind inspire,  
 Than E M U L A T I O N ' s unremitting fire !  
 It spurs him on, and drives him to explore  
 Some useful plan, perhaps ne'er known before ;  
 As when the merchant on the shelvy coast,  
 Sees all his cargo likely to be lost,  
 His hopes appear in vain, and O ! the thought !  
 So much fatigue, such vast expence for nought !  
 'Twixt hope and wild despair, he straight exerts  
 A double force, with new-invented arts.

O R like the tender youth, whom Cupid warms,  
 When cruel jealousy his soul alarms,  
 The very thought his former bliss destroys,  
 Tranquility no longer he enjoys ;  
 Nor can his best efforts afford him ease,  
 For still the Vulture on his liver preys.  
 Imagination paints the lovely prize,  
 With nameless graces deck'd, before his eyes ;  
 But how distressing, when he thinks those charms  
 Are sweetly lock'd within his rivals arms !



And that in raptures too, her snowy breast,  
 Swells in his bosom, panting to be prest !  
 Distracting this indeed, and O ! what care !  
 What toil would he endure to win the fair !  
 Invention's on the rack, he spares no cost,  
 While thus she seems in danger to be lost.

So swells the Student's mind with new desires,  
 When EMULATION true his bosom fires :  
 The laurel once propos'd, he straight perceives  
 A thousand honours painted on the leaves :  
 And, quite enamour'd with the sight, he cries,  
 " How happy he who wins the glorious prize !  
 " Who thus succeeds deservedly may claim  
 " The grateful tribute of immortal fame !  
 " Could I but be the man, then would my praise  
 " Become the subject of the highest lays !"

H O P E elevates his soul, he spares no pains,  
 But chearfully from indolence refrains ;  
 Strong motives urge and agitate his breast,  
 Sleep he disdains, and scorns the sweets of rest ;

In keen pursuit the task he undertakes,  
 And pow'rs long dormant to his aid awakes.  
 Some time he perseveres in rapid course,  
 Nor opposition meets to stop his force ;  
 On ev'ry side the business prospers well,  
 And higher still his expectations swell !

BUT O the grief ! perhaps before he knows,  
 He meets a crowd of unexpected woes ;  
 Ev'n while success attends his happy race,  
 Some difficulty stares him in the face.  
 Confus'd he stops ! his courage quickly fails :  
 O'er yielding hopes timidity prevails !  
 How gloomy then his mind ! how much downcast !  
 How chang'd the prospect fair, so lately past !  
 So disconcerted all his mental pow'rs,  
 That ev'ry scene with dreary aspect lows,  
 Anxieties immediately take place,  
 And cares ineffable disturb his peace.  
 Doubts, jealousies, and fears conspire,  
 And dread of shame, still blended with desire.



Hard is the task such feelings to express,  
 Too difficult to paint such deep distress !  
 What sharp emotions must the mind sustain,  
 While thus he views his former hopes as vain !  
 How hard to bear the mortifying thought,  
 That all his best efforts avail him nought !  
 That some competitor appears to rise,  
 And snatch the honours from before his eyes !

HERE fainting hope, in sable raiment clad,  
 Can scarce prevail to raise her drooping head !  
 For time elapsing, suffers no delay,  
 But hurries on the Distribution-day ;  
 When ev'ry one, embark'd in this great cause,  
 The grand pursuit of merit and applause,  
 Shall either have his labours crown'd with fame ;  
 Or view his conduct with a secret shame :  
 And therefore this alternative takes place,  
 To lose the garland or renew the race :  
 But EMULATION for the latter sues,  
 Still urging on the former to refuse.

The genial spark within for ever glows,  
 Nor deigns to yield, whatever may oppose ;  
 And from furrounding gloom breaks forth at length,  
 With force superior to its former strength :  
 As when the flame, supprest by fuel dry,  
 Some moments in obscurity may ly ;  
 Yet suddenly surmounts its usual height,  
 With greater warmth, and more effulgent light.  
 So EMULATION here, tho' long confin'd,  
 Half lost and buried in the drooping mind,  
 Once more begins to raise her noble head,  
 And all around her energy to spread :  
 Above each obstacle with ease she soars,  
 And methods formerly unknown explores.

THE Student now with joy his work renews,  
 With utmost diligence his course pursues ;  
 His bosom fondly burns with fresh desires,  
 And higher than before his soul aspires :  
 So pleasing now the task, so great his joys,  
 That all his thoughts the exercise employs.



Not mov'd by war, nor shock'd by hostile arms,  
 Regardless of the fair and all her charms ;  
 And past the reach of all our common cares,  
 With assiduity he perseveres :—  
 Nor joins with those who cast their time away,  
 In giddy round, loose jests, or idle play :  
 Beneath his notice far, such trifles fall,  
 With scornful eye he overlooks them all !  
 Unwearied in his course, with great delight,  
 The day he spends, nor stops throughout the night ;  
 For should he chance to sleep, then in a dream,  
 His fancy loosely rambles o'er the theme,  
 Or probably, her airy course pursues,  
 Runs thro' the whole, the Distribution views :  
 There painting boldly, to the slumb'ring youth,  
 A scene, perhaps, quite foreign to the truth :  
 But true or false, it robs him of his rest ;  
 Emotions complicated crowd his breast.  
 And ere the ruddy morn her light has spread,  
 He springs with ardour from the downy bed !  
 In lucubration closely plys the task,  
 'Till silent Night withdraws her sable mask.

Incessantly he works, nor ever tires,  
So much the love of future fame inspires !

W H A T then does he regard the sportive throng,  
The soothing softness of the rural song !  
Or all the beauties that the rising day  
Can o'er the variegated world display !  
Not all creation's nameless charms combin'd,  
Can ever force the subject from his mind ;  
For now the great decisive time draws near,  
Encreasing doubts, anxiety and fear !  
What therefore can suspend, or overpow'r  
The pressing thoughts of that important hour !  
That hour which comes at last, and clearly shows,  
He formerly had felt but fancied woes.  
His merit then appears, and must prevail,  
For Justice tries with an impartial scale.

W H E N thus his toils, his doubts and fears are past,  
The happy DISTRIBUTION comes at last.  
O ! that's the day ! the fair, the blissful morn,  
When signal honours shall the brow adorn !



Then shall his highest wishes all be crown'd,  
 His former cares in sweet oblivion drown'd !  
 In oceans of delight the mind must roll,  
 And joys ineffable transport the soul !  
 How charm'd ! how blest with that endearing scene !  
 How pleas'd to see the FACULTY convene !  
 In order plac'd, a venerable band,  
 Each with a willing heart, and lib'ral hand !  
 A lib'ral hand indeed, for nought they owe,  
 Yet all rejoice their bounties to bestow !  
 Each, with a sweet complacency, seems prone,  
 And ready to distribute to his own.

JUST imitation of that sov'reign care,  
 That kind benevolence we daily share !  
 For heav'n directs us how we should proceed,  
 And in the end rewards us for the deed.  
 So they their skill, their utmost care exert,  
 To youth all necessary aid impart :  
 Their tender minds, by gentle means allure,  
 To search out knowledge true, and wisdom pure,  
 Thro' intricacies dark point out their way,  
 And at the last, them for the whole repay.

Whoever therefore for himself does best,  
 Dwells highest in his noble Patron's breast ;  
 The laurel now receives, and for his care,  
 That fam'd, that honourable branch shall wear !

W H O then in such a case, would grudge to spend  
 The irksome Winter out, from end to end,  
 To quit the fruitless search of trivial joys,  
 The mean allurements of inferior toys ;  
 With special care his business to perform,  
 In spite of opposition, cold or storm ;  
 In order to obtain a time like this,  
 A day of such promotion, and such bliss !  
 Propitious hour ! that can to ev'ry heart,  
 To all now present, some delight impart !  
 Behold how all apparently express,  
 Some share of pleasure, either more or less ;  
 Thro' ev'ry breast around, the blissful flame  
 Spreads feelings too sublime, too warm to name !

T H E Presidents with joy unfeign'd abound,  
 To see their labours with success thus crown'd ;



To see the youth, committed to their care,  
Aspire so justly to a nobler sphere.

The Student must rejoice, perhaps as much,  
With ready hand the pleasing gift to touch;  
And now approaches, with a gentle pace,  
The rosy blush appearing in his face:  
Unusual warmth flows sweetly through his veins,  
While such a mark of dignity he gains!

ANOTHER standing by, who never knew,  
Nor felt what emulous efforts could do,  
Immediately perceives the fond desire,

The soft endearing flame, the new-born fire:

“ Ye Pow’rs (thinks he) what now do I deserve!

“ Why did my mind so far from duty swerve!

“ Why have I thus consum’d so many days,

“ So many nights, in vanity and ease!

“ Regardless of the gifts receiv’d from Heav’n,

“ The precious hours so bountifully giv’n!

“ The session’s past! th’ indulgent season’s gone!

“ But what have I perform’d! what have I done!

“ Sure Justice must avenge the dreadful crime,

“ Of such neglect, such wilful waste of time!”

S u c h are his thoughts, and such the cruel fire,  
 The pungent feelings of reflections dire !  
 But if he thus upon himself reflects,  
 His cogitations yield the best effects.  
 The spark begun, continues still to burn,  
 'Till opportunities again return.  
 He then begins, with resolutions new,  
 A course more amiable to pursue ;  
 Attempts the business of a riper age,  
 Nor yields to charms that could before engage.  
 His utmost skill, and ev'ry art he tries,  
 On purpose to obtain the promis'd prize.

B u t stop ! my Muse !—Why should you careless stray,  
 Or loosely wander from the beaten way ?  
 Return again, the former path explore,  
 The glorious Distribution view once more,  
 And then farewell !—Farewel !—but tell me, how  
 Shall one endure to lose the prospect now !  
 To leave the sight of such engaging charms,  
 And quit the scene that every bosom warms !  
 Behold what grandeur shines throughout the whole,  
 What nameless beauties captivate each soul !



SPECTATORS crowding round, in fond amaze,  
 With soft delight and admiration gaze :  
 All wond'ring seem, just ready to proclaim  
 The worthy facts, and spread the rising fame ;  
 So when the scene's withdrawn, and all retir'd,  
 Each, with regard and tender love inspir'd,  
 Shall gladly hasten to relate the whole,  
 And spread the dear report from pole to pole !

THE victor too, well paid for all his toil,  
 Bears home the laurel to his native soil !  
 How grand the ornament ! how great the prize !  
 How beautiful to all beholders eyes !  
 How far does it exalt the bearer's name,  
 And add fresh grandeur to his former fame !  
 Thro' distant parts his character extends,  
 An honour to himself and all his friends.

SUCH are the good effects, the happy fruits  
 Of diligence, in laudable pursuits ;  
 The pleasant fruits, which none may hope to find,  
 'Till EMULATION fructify the mind !

Let therefore ev'ry one his pow'rs exert,  
 Most strenuously attempt the nobler part,  
 The lovely paths, with vigour still pursue,  
 Where objects so endearing fill his view !  
 Nor should the youth, who has perform'd his best,  
 Let grief or envy rankle in his breast :  
 Why should he in the least appear cast down,  
 Because another bears away the crown !  
 For tho' he chanc'd to miss his special aim,  
 Nor soars so high upon the wings of fame ;  
 Yet, in the brave attempt, he surely gains  
 An ample recompence, for all his pains :  
 Such constant application must prepare,  
 And lead him on to fill some higher sphere.  
 For virtuous EMULATION still ascends,  
 With graceful steps, to more exalted ends :  
 But tho' she thus aspires, nor fails to rise,  
 And can with ease, so many aggrandize ;  
 Yet all must here confess, her better part  
 Flows from the PRESIDENT's indulgent art ;  
 Without his timely aid, to help in turn,  
 This latent fire would quickly cease to burn !



MAY then some great MECÆNAS still preside,  
At once to animate and safely guide !  
And may th' ALMIGHTY still such Patrons raise,  
As deck the brow with never-fading bays,  
Affording freely, each enticing charm,  
However great, the youthful mind to warm !  
Nor should the youth, with such a Patron blest,  
Themselves indulge, in sloth and idle rest :  
But thankfully employ each passing hour,  
With warmest gratitude to that great Pow'r,  
Who deigns to place them thus, beneath such care ;  
And whose great bounties ev'ry day they share :  
Who in them first infus'd that ardent flame,  
Which crowns their labours with immortal fame.

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O D E  
TO  
D I L I G E N C E

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O D E  
T O  
D I L I G E N C E.

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## ODE TO DILIGENCE.

*Nil tam difficile est, quod non solertia vincat.*

**H**AIL! mighty Pow'r, to whom we owe,  
Beyond what words can fully show,

Or any art express!

To thee, O DILIGENCE! we bend,

To thee! on whom we all depend,

For bounties more or less!

Before thee all

May prostrate fall,

When flush'd with new success!

SHOULD any object more inspire!

Should aught so fan the grateful fire;

Or such affection claim!

How highly ought we all to prize,

The means by which we justly rise,

To wealth and endless fame!

And may explore,

Immensely more,

Than time permits to name!

To thee the sage his wisdom owes ;  
From thee alone perfection flows,

In science or in art :

By Diligence and constant pains,  
The lover too, at last obtains

The darling of his heart ;

Whose smiles for nought,

He long had fought,

To ease his cruel smart !

BUT where's the task for thee too hard !

What can thy mighty force retard !

Or what thy power sway !

Thy potent arm, a trusty guide,

Can us thro' storms of wind and tide,

Or rugged paths convey :

Thro' highest lore,

By thee we soar,

Tho' difficult the way !



WHEN mountains, heap'd on mountains high,  
Approaching near the azure sky,

Our progress seem to stop;  
By thy kind hand we're gently led,  
And taught with ease their brow to tread,

Or mount their lofty top:

The highest tree

We climb by thee,

And all its branches lop!

WHEN hard and intricate the course,  
We find thee still the chief resource;

Thou all-prevailing spring!

May then each tongue, in tuneful lays,  
A grateful revenue of praise,

And honours to thee bring!

And may the nine

Inspire each line,

While thus of thee we sing!

